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14 July 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

**SUBJECT: Alternative Arrangements for the National
Reconnaissance Office (NRO)**

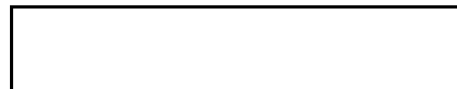
1. Submitted herewith are alternative proposed arrangements covering the NRO. The essential difference between these proposed arrangements is that one establishes the NRO as, in certain respects, a line organization, while the other establishes the NRO as an essentially staff function. The essential factors affecting a decision between these two concepts appear to me as follows.

a. The NRO with line responsibilities.

(1) The line responsibilities contemplated for the NRO under this concept relate largely to the engineering, development, production and procurement of new systems. Under this arrangement CIA, the Air Force (and other agencies of Government) would be allocated funds for research purposes. After decision by the Executive Committee that a design should be accepted for development, responsibility would pass to the NRO for implementing the decision. The NRO would have the staff necessary to administer contracts for the development, for example, of the systems selected as a new general search system.

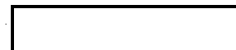
(2) The advantages of adopting this proposal appear to me to be as follows:

NRO review(s)
completed.



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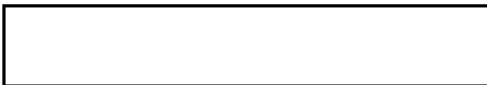
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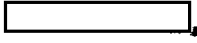
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(a). The arrangement, as discussed with Mr. Vance, leaves the Agency in control of certain on-going projects (the U-2, CORONA, and probably OXCART and , and possibly ISINGLASS). This leaves CIA with enough projects to constitute active participation in the program and keep a competent staff busy with important unilateral responsibilities. As staff advisors to the DCI, in his capacity as a member of the Executive Committee, it also affords CIA/DDS&T an adequate opportunity to review and influence the development of the NRP as a whole.

(b). It affords (through the Executive Committee) adequate opportunity to the DCI to participate in and influence the NRP as a whole. DCI influence and participation would be strengthened by the control which he is afforded, under this proposed arrangement, of the SOC.

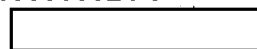
(c). The arrangement is compatible with very strong views expressed by Mr. Vance and would also be compatible with views which have been expressed by members of the President's Board, particularly Dr. Baker.

(3) Disadvantages.

The creation of an NRO along these lines would, to some degree, cut across the existing command responsibilities of both CIA and the Air Force. It also eliminates from CIA certain responsibilities which, if retained, would give CIA stronger control of at least some of the elements of the NRP and would provide greater opportunity for assertion

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of influence over this important program. The proposed location of the D/NRO, under this arrangement, in the office of the Secretary of the Air Force certainly constitutes a threat to the integrity of the program from the point of view of responsiveness to national intelligence purposes.

b. The NRO as a staff responsibility.

(1) Under this arrangement the D/NRO would act essentially as a staff advisor to the Executive Committee and would recommend allocation of the development of new systems to an existing agency (either CIA or the Air Force, or possibly some other military service or agency).

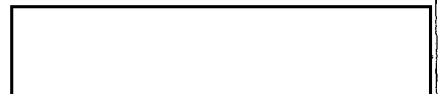
(2) Advantages.

(a) This conforms to existing command concepts. It is essentially the position we have taken in the negotiations during the past year. It would utilize the competence already established in both the systems command of the Air Force and in CIA.

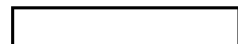
(b) It would retain in CIA a clear-cut control over at least some of the payloads and systems required for the exploitation of opportunities for overhead reconnaissance.

(c) It would be supported by the uniformed Air Force and DD/S&T of CIA.

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(3) Disadvantages.

(a) It is at least likely that it would perpetuate some of the undesirable features of the competitive attitude existing in CIA, the Pentagon and the Air Force.

(b) It would meet with very strong opposition from Mr. Vance, who has expressly stated that he would find such an arrangement unacceptable because "it would vest too much power in the Air Force." Mr. Vance's views on this subject appear to me to require very serious consideration, particularly in the light of the reorganization which has been announced in the civilian management of the Air Force. The appointments of Dr. Brown and Norman Paul appear to me indicative of a strong desire on the part of the Secretary of Defense to assert civilian control over the Air Force. Dr. McMillan's departure can only be regarded as indicative of a desire on the part of the Defense Department to establish a new basis for relations with CIA.

(c) The President's Board would probably favor alternative a., and Mr. Bundy's office would probably find alternative a. a reasonable solution.

2. Recommendation.

I recommend adoption of alternative a. If it is decided to adopt alternative b., then I believe that negotiations with the Defense Department should be initiated by a letter from the DCI, along the lines of the draft attached to alternative b.

John A. Bross

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